

A NOTE ON THE STATUS OF *CARALLUMA ORTHOLOBA* LAVRANOS (ASCLEPIADACEAE)

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ABSTRACT

Reasons are given for considering *C. ortholoba* Lavranos as a synonym of *C. acutiloba* N.E.Br.

UITTREKSEL

'N NOTA OOR DIE STATUS VAN *CARALLUMA ORTHOLOBA* LAVRANOS (ASCLEPIADACEAE)

Redes word gegee waarom *C. ortholoba* Lavranos as 'n sinoniem van *C. acutiloba* N.E.Br. beskou moet word.

The name *Caralluma ortholoba* was published by Lavranos in volume 38 (2) of this journal where it is regarded as a relative of *C. hottentotorum* N.E.Br. The author was incorrect in allying it with *C. hottentotorum*, however, as it differs from this species in the following respects: (1) The staminal column in *C. hottentotorum* is almost as tall as broad and may be almost spherical with the inner corona lobes rising towards the centre. The illustration [Jl S. Afr. Bot. 38(2): 98 (1972)] shows that this is not the case in *C. ortholoba* in which the column is broad and flat-topped. (2) In *C. hottentotorum* the outer corona-lobes are usually reduced to two very small, often pouch-like structures on the side of the column. Species allied to *C. hottentotorum* in which the outer corona-lobes are as large as those described for *C. ortholoba* [e.g. *C. aurea* Luckh. and some forms of *C. incarnata* (N.E.Br.)] have an entirely different corolla shape to that of *C. ortholoba* and have numerous hairs on the corolla face. The coronal structure of *C. ortholoba* is, however, identical to that of *C. acutiloba*. (3) The illustration in Jl S. Afr. Bot. depicts a bud of *C. ortholoba* as well and this is identical to buds of *C. acutiloba* (which generally have a broad, bowl-shaped base and a narrow cylindrical portion near the tip) and are not similar to those of *C. hottentotorum* in any of its forms.

Lavranos, in his paper (1972), mentions three further distinguishing features: (1) Corolla yellowish with minute irregular purple blotches; (2) Corolla-lobes broadly deltoid, 3 mm long and about as broad; (3) Corolla campanulate.

Flowers of *C. acutiloba* are very variable in colour and this ranges from yellow or yellow with irregular blotches (of various colours) to very dark, purple-black.

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The ratio of corolla-lobe length to breadth in *C. acutiloba* is also very variable and specimens have been observed with lobes from as long as broad at the base to over twice as long as broad at the base.

A "campanulate" corolla similar to that recorded for *C. ortholoba* was observed in plants brought to Cape Town from Taaiboshhoek (the type locality of *C. ortholoba*). However, plants seen subsequently in flower at the same locality (Bruyns 1523, NBG) were *C. acutiloba*.

It is therefore clear that *C. ortholoba* is merely a variant of *C. acutiloba* and the former name must fall into synonymy as follows:

Caralluma acutiloba N.E.Br., in Thistleton-Dyer, Fl. Cap. 4(1): 877 (1909); White and Sloane, The Stapelieae 1:315 (1937). Type: Cape, Little Namaqualand, Templeman in Pillans 8 (BOL). *Caralluma ortholoba* Lavranos in Jl S. Afr. Bot. 38(2): 97 (1972). Type: Cape, Loeriesfontein-3018 (Khamiesberg): Taaiboshhoek (-DD), Lavranos 8227 (PRE).

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REFERENCES

- WHITE, A. and SLOANE, B. L., 1937. *The Stapelieae* 1. Pasadena, California: Abbey San Encino Press.
- LAVRANOS, J., 1972. Two New Species of *Caralluma* from the Western Part of the Cape Province. *Jl S. Afr. Bot.* 38(2): 97-101.